



Advocates for people with intellectual disabilities
and related developmental disabilities

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**Testimony before the Committee on Education:
S.B. #1038 (Raised), "An Act Concerning Individualized Education
Programs**

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**By
Lynn C. Warner, Executive Director/The Arc of Connecticut**

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Senator Slossberg, Representative Morin, and Members of the Government
Administration and Elections Committee:

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I am, Lynn Warner, Executive Director of The Arc of Connecticut, a 59 year-
old statewide advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual
disabilities and their families. We have 23 local chapters that provide
supports, services, and advocacy for individuals with intellectual and related
developmental disabilities throughout Connecticut.

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I am here today to testify in support of S.B. 1038, "An Act Concerning
Individualized Education Programs.

As written, the proposed changes of S.B. 1038 appear to improve the
dissemination and communication of information regarding IEPs to parents
and/or guardians. S.B. 1038 also strengthens the quality of education for
teachers preparing for a certification in special education by improving the
instruction of the development and implementation of IEPs. Both revisions
can help strengthen the educational experience for a child requiring special
education services.

In many instances, Planning and Placement Team meetings (PPTs) are
tedious and contentious. Families are stressed and overwhelmed, especially
at the initial meeting, by the extent of paperwork, and the clinical terms
along with a veritable alphabet soup of acronyms used to describe an

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individual they only know as their child. By allowing an opportunity to meet with the members of the PPT prior to the initial meeting to discuss the clinical terms and the implications to the findings in reports and evaluations, this only improves the likelihood of the development of a partnership between the school and the family or guardian(s).

Additionally, requiring a more developed curriculum of the IEP for student teachers can lead to a better understand of realistic goal setting, attainable achievements, and accomplishments that are in the child's best interest for his/her educational experience and personal development. Specifically having course work in the communication of IEP procedures to families or guardians is strongly encouraged and supported for all of the reasons I referred to previously.

Improved communication and the timeliness of sharing information can lead to greater opportunities for team-building, trust, and collaboration. Strengthened educational opportunities and requirements for special education certifications means a greater base of knowledge and understanding that can be very helpful in working with children who need different types of supports and services while attending school. With these goals in mind – the student wins.

Particularly for that reason – The Arc of Connecticut would like to encourage this committee to vote favorably on S.B. 1038. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.